

HOUSE BILL 2994

By Parkinson

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49,
relative to parental involvement in public schools.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 6, Part 70, is amended by adding the following language as new, appropriately designated sections:

49-6-7004. The department of education shall establish within the schools in the achievement school district a four-year pilot program to increase parent involvement in schools as set forth in §§ 49-8-7005 - 49-6-7007. The pilot program shall begin with the 2012-2013 school year. Each school in the achievement school district shall participate in the pilot program. In the second year of the pilot program, the office of research and education accountability in the office of the comptroller of the treasury shall study the program and make recommendations to the department as to changes and improvements that could be made to the program. At the conclusion of the four-year pilot program, the office of research and education accountability shall evaluate the program as to whether it should be continued and expanded. The office of research and education accountability shall report its findings and conclusions to the department and to the education committees of the senate and the house of representatives by July 1, 2016.

49-6-7005. As used in §§ 49-6-7004 - 49-6-7007, unless the context requires otherwise:

(1) "Parent":

(A) Means a parent whose parental rights have not been terminated, or a person appointed by a court to make decisions regarding the support, care, education, health, or welfare of a student; and

(B) Does not mean a guardian ad litem or the state; and

(2) "Student" means an individual who is under eighteen (18) years of age and attending a public school or a public charter school.

49-6-7006. Any current information packets, forms, videos or other means used by a school in the achievement school district for sharing information with a parent shall include the following information:

(1) Expectations of parents concerning their student's school attendance;

(2) Expectations of parents concerning student's physical readiness for school, including provision for adequate night-time sleep, necessary school supplies, meals, and immunizations and medical care; provided, that necessary school supplies may be obtained through various organizations and meals may be obtained through the school's free or reduced-priced meal program if certain qualifications are met; and

(3) Expectations of parents concerning their student's academic work, including time set aside for daily homework and reading, nightly checks of homework completion and preparation for tests, early preparation of assigned school projects, signatures on required forms, and checks of the contents of their student's school backpack.

49-6-7007.

(a) Each teacher shall monitor and assess the quality of a parent's involvement for each student in the teacher's class. Each student report card issued pursuant to part 9 of this chapter, shall include a section in which the

teacher grades the parent's involvement as excellent, satisfactory, needs improvement or unsatisfactory based on the following:

- (1) The parent's response to requests for meetings or communication;
- (2) The student's completion of homework and preparation for tests;
- (3) The student's physical preparation for school; and
- (4) The frequency of the student's absence and tardiness.

(b) Prior to the application of subsection (c), a parent may appeal a parent involvement grade assigned under subsection (a) through a process adopted by the achievement school district, and its schools, whereby the principal, the teacher, and the parent shall meet to discuss the grade's determination and provide feedback on how to improve the grade.

(c)

(1) If a parent receives a parent involvement grade of unsatisfactory under subsection (a), then the report card shall include an attached written notification, addressed to the parent, requiring the parent to attend a mandatory parent-teacher meeting to discuss how the parent can improve the parent's involvement with the student's education. The achievement school district and its schools shall establish guidelines for scheduling such mandatory meetings that take into consideration the parent's work schedule.

(2) If a parent receives a second parent involvement grade of unsatisfactory, then the report card shall include an attached written notification, addressed to the parent, requiring the parent to attend

mandatory parenting classes, the total number of which shall be determined by the entity providing the classes. The parent shall be responsible for paying for the parenting classes, unless the parent is indigent. The department of education shall develop guidelines for determining indigency and the applicable procedure for such parents. The department of education and the achievement school district, assisted by the school's LEA prior to placement in the achievement school district, shall explore and determine whether appropriate parenting classes that teach parents about the importance of being involved in their children's education, the expectations that are placed on parents and effective and appropriate ways to be involved are available through community organizations and other organizations and agencies on a sliding scale basis to which the parents may be referred in cases in which the parents are unable to afford the full-cost of parenting classes.

(3) If a parent receives a third parent involvement grade of unsatisfactory, then the report card shall include an attached written notification, addressed to the parent, requiring the parent and student to attend mandatory family counseling and the student to attend mandatory child counseling, the total number of sessions of which shall be determined by the entity providing the sessions. The parent shall be responsible for paying for such counseling, unless the parent is indigent. The department of education shall develop guidelines for determining indigency and the applicable procedure for such parents. The department of education and the achievement school district, assisted by the school's LEA prior to placement in the achievement school district, shall explore

and determine if family and child counseling services are available in the community on a sliding scale basis to which the parents and students may be referred in cases in which the parents are unable to afford the full-cost of counseling.

(d) The achievement school district and its schools shall develop parental honor rolls or other means of recognizing and honoring parents whose parental involvement in their children's schools is satisfactory or exemplary. The achievement school district is urged to involve local businesses in offering incentives for parents that receive parent involvement grades of satisfactory or excellent.

(e) The achievement school district shall develop guidelines for parents to receive waivers from the application of this section for emergency situations, including, but not limited to, family or health emergencies, natural disasters, and similar situations.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.